

REMARKS

Claims 11-21 are pending in the application. Applicants thank the Examiner for withdrawing the rejection of claims 11, 12 and 14-19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Tarplee et al. (EPO Patent Application Publication No. EP0777998A1), and the rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite in view of the August 10, 2010 Amendment. Applicants also thank the Examiner for withdrawing the objection to the specification.

The Claimed Invention

The present invention discloses a dishwasher that allows washed dishes located in the washing container to be dried effectively and efficiently from an economic perspective so as to keep the energy consumption as low as possible in spite of a very good drying performance. The dishwasher includes a washing container 12, a device for washing items retained in the washing container using rinsing liquor, a medium-retaining container for retaining therein, a vaporisable medium or a sublimable medium, and a sorber with reversibly dehydratable material.

The heating of the air in the container, and especially in the sorber, is largely sufficient to adequately heat the rinsing liquor and/or the dishes. Thus, any further heating can be largely dispensed with and the energy used for desorption can be almost completely used for heating the rinsing liquor and/or the dishes apart from the small amount of energy required to overcome the binding forces between water and reversibly dehydratable material. Using the sorber features of the present invention, washed dishes

can be effectively dried with a low heat content, e.g. plastic parts because no heating is required in the partial program step preceding the "dry" partial program. The rapid drying also allows severely reduced bacteria growth or even completely prevents bacteria growth which advantageously affects the hygiene conditions on the cleaned dishes.

The Nonstatutory Double Patenting Rejections

Claims 11-20 are provisionally rejected on the grounds of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 11-20 of co-pending application No. 10/581,238, over claims 9-15 of co-pending application No. 10/562,105, and over claims 10-18 of co-pending application No. 10/564,230. Since the claims in this application as well as each of the aforementioned applications are subject to amendment during prosecution, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection be held in abeyance until allowance of claims in the present application.

The Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 11-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hesse (German Patent Publication No. DE3741652) in view of Tarplee et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The grounds of rejection acknowledge that Hesse does not teach the use of a sorber and a liquid to create a heat-pump in the cooling/heating duct of the air loop and relies on the disclosure of Tarplee et al., concluding that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art the time of the invention to modify Hesse with Tarplee et al. to create a dishwashing machine with a closed-loop drying system which saves energy to achieve the expected result (citing Tarplee et al., at pg. 2, lines 23-25).

Further, in the Response to Arguments at page 2 of the Office Action, the grounds of rejection further state that in response to Applicants' arguments provided in the June 11, 2010 Amendment that the argument "is a mere allegation of patentability" ... and a "general allegation that the claims define a patentable invention without specifically pointing out how the language of the claims patentably distinguishes them from the references."

Applicants respectfully submit that Hesse discloses the use of a heat exchanger within a dishwasher for reducing moisture in air in a closed system after the dishes have been washed, and the cleaning water drained. There is no disclosure, nor would the Hesse heat exchanger be applied to heating *rinsing liquid with the thermal energy used for desorbing* the claimed sorber as claimed. As such, assuming arguendo, there would be no motivation to modify Hesse with the features of Tarplee et al. Notwithstanding the lack of motivation, neither Hesse nor Tarplee et al. are designed for or suggest this claimed feature. Applicants respectfully submit that this feature is recited in, for example, claim 1 as "a sorber with reversibly dehydratable material, the sorber and the medium retaining container being communicated with one another such that gas exchange takes place therebetween, the reversibly dehydratable material acting to absorb vapor that has flowed from the medium-retaining container into the sorber, whereupon the reversibly dehydratable material transforms from a dehydrated state into a hydrated state and the reversibly dehydratable material being restorable from a hydrated state into a dehydrated state by the application of thermal energy to the reversibly dehydratable material, the sorber being operable, on the one hand, to directly dry items retained in the

washing container and being operable, on the other hand, to provide the thermal energy used for desorbing the sorber such that at least one of the rinsing liquor and the items located in the washing container are heated thereby.” Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 11-21 are allowable over the combination of Hesse and Tarplee et al.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, allowance of claims 11-21 is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the remarks herein, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,

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